

Capacity Building Solidifies Gains in Security: Task Force Marne's Non-Lethal Targeting

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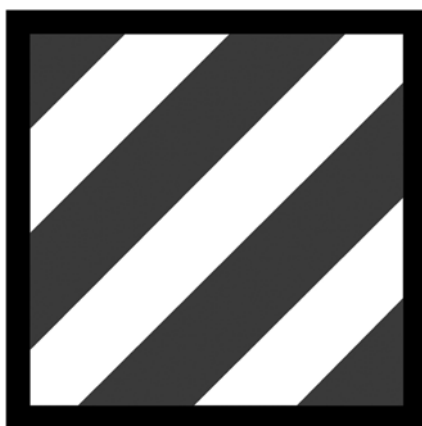
Editorial Abstract: *The author provides an on-the-ground perspective of influence operations concepts and activities in the current counterinsurgency campaign in Iraq. He examines development of non-conventional targeting processes, vital relationships among Coalition and host nation agencies, and measures of effectiveness. LTC de Carvalho concludes by summarizing the resulting progress toward nation-building goals.*

“Information Operations and the larger umbrella of non-lethal operations are having a huge impact on the perception of progress [in Iraq] and the Iraqis’ way of life; we must continue these efforts as they will ultimately lead toward greater stability, unity, and prosperity”

-- Lieutenant General
Raymond T. Odierno

Since the “Surge of Forces” in Iraq in early 2007, the Coalition has made significant progress toward stabilizing the country, degrading malign foreign influences, and affecting positive change across all Lines of Operations (LOOs). Once common place, conducting full-scale kinetic strikes are no longer the number one attack-choice for ground-owning commanders. Commanders, continuing to make progress in security, are utilizing kinetic strikes mainly to reduce threats to ground forces and set the conditions for future operations, especially in areas where the Coalition has little to no presence. As Coalition Forces continue to degrade Al Qaeda and other sectarian extremist efforts, the operational environment (OE) has become more permissive; allowing for capacity building initiatives in governance, economic development, and rule of law. These non-lethal efforts, carefully synchronized with maneuver operations, are yielding quantifiable results. Coalition and civilian casualties are at an all-time low, numerous schools and hospitals are once again functional, and repairs completed to critical essential services such as electricity, water purification, sanitation, and medical. Unquestionably, many commanders correlate the down

turn in violence throughout Iraq to both the precision of kinetic operations and effectiveness of well planned and executed non-lethal activities. These non-lethal capacity- building initiatives are powerful and long-lasting influencing tools capable of winning the population’s hearts and minds. Even the most basic community improvements provide local nationals hope and a glimpse of a better future; positive changes erode



*3rd Infantry Division Insignia, worn by
Task Force Marne soldiers.
(US Army)*

willingness to accept violence, live in fear, and continue supporting terrorism. Most importantly and perhaps the most compelling attribute, non-lethal efforts have solidified gains commanders have so diligently made in security.

The art of planning and executing non-lethal activities in Iraq is evolving continually as both the operational and information environments mature; however, this is not a simple or often understood aspect of counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. Doctrinal education may provide the foundation for conceptual COIN understanding, but it is first-hand experience coupled

with flexibility and agility that allows commanders to succeed in operations that, inevitably, are exceedingly difficult and complex. Today in Iraq, Multi-National Divisions are focusing more attention toward planning and executing non-lethal efforts. This article focuses on defining non-lethal targeting as adopted by Third Infantry Division in its role as Task Force Marne and Multi-National Division Center (MND-C) in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom V, highlight the development of its non-lethal targeting process, and provide an overview of how one subordinate brigade achieved particular success in the non-lethal arena.

Defining Non-Lethal Targeting

Traditional targeting, as defined in Army Field Manual 6-20-10, *The Targeting Process*, is part of the tactical decision making process used to focus the battlefield operating systems to achieve the commander’s intent. Further defined, the targeting process is challenging; locating, identifying, classifying, tracking, and attacking targets and assessing battle damage with limited sensor assets and attack systems is difficult. This targeting definition and its related decide, detect, deliver, and assess (D3A) methodology serves well to manage the engagement of conventional targets using kinetic munitions; however, it does not adequately address the challenges associated with non-lethal targeting as it relates to COIN operations. Hence, innovative non-lethal targeting requires a diverse group of experienced division-level planners, frequent interaction with subordinate “ground-owning” units, continuous gauging of progress, and proficiency in managing

and allocating resources. As non-lethal targets and projects mature along their life cycles, planners must be prepared and willing to make adjustments to the plan, should it stall or experience shortcomings. Although there is no substitution for first-hand knowledge, inexperienced non-lethal planners must often rely on doctrine to establish the plan's foundation and outline key objectives. Unfortunately, existing "targeting" doctrine is insufficient to guide planners beyond the initial framework and through the non-lethal targeting process as it relates to tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs). On a positive note, there are no shortages of OIF non-lethal lessons learned which doctrine writers can use to refine and update current doctrine.

Current analysis of joint doctrine also shows limited detailed guidance on non-lethal planning. Joint Publication 3-09 (Joint Fire Support) defines non-lethal fires as the employment of integrated non-lethal capabilities to produce synergistic results. Examples are masking smoke, area denial, and employment of some IO capabilities, such as electronic attack (EA), that deceive the enemy, disable the enemy's command and control (C2) systems, and disrupt operations. The definition also states that the employment of non-lethal fires is especially important when restraint and limitations on the use of deadly force are directed. Furthermore, Joint Publication 3-60, *Joint Targeting* describes non-lethal as the employment of IO when commanders are considering the reconstruction or reuse of a target. These joint non-lethal targeting definitions, although addressing the non-destructive aspects of attacking infrastructure, military targets, and key leadership, do not provide the level of fidelity required for comprehensive non-lethal planning and execution.

The new Field Manual 3-34, *Counterinsurgency* provides the most up-to-date and widely-accepted "boots-on-the-ground" description of targeting as it refers to non-lethal activities in support of COIN operations. It states the important of understand that targeting is

done for all operations, not just attacks against insurgents. The targeting process can support IO, Civil Military Operations (CMO), and even meetings between commanders and host-nation leaders, based on commander's desires. As such, the term non-lethal has evolved to encompass much more than the doctrinal core and related IO capabilities. As an example, non-lethal now includes enablers such as the use of money-as-amunition, rule of law, and local national advisors; all tools capable of significantly shaping the OE. On 1 January 2008, Task Force Marne leadership, desiring to capitalize on significant gains made in security, shifted its main effort to planning and executing non-lethal operations. Command leadership attributed the Task Force's non-lethal success to its comprehensive non-lethal strategies, which, through the collective experiences of the working group, matured progressively over 15 months.

Developing an Effective Non-Lethal Targeting Process

As with any effective staff process, it is important to develop mechanisms to identify, capture, facilitate, and incorporate the following key components: command group's intent and guidance; working group inputs and outputs; available resources and capabilities; tactical to operational-level feedback; and analysis of feedback. Of note, analyzing feedback, although time-consuming and often tedious, is needed to measure the effectiveness of non-lethal operations. It also allows non-lethal working groups to identify potential problem areas and make recommendations for adjustments to either planning efforts or the reallocation of resources. As such, the non-lethal working group is the nucleus or central point for all planning activities. It is here where staff leads and group representatives meet to coordinate myriad non-lethal efforts and to prepare for the non-lethal targeting meeting. The non-lethal targeting meeting is the venue for providing the command group an update on all non-lethal activities and, more importantly, to gain

Commanding General (CG) approval on issues requiring either a decision or further guidance pertaining to the desired "way-ahead."

Task Force Marne organized a productive non-lethal construct by aligning selected primary, special, and other by-exception staff under the Deputy Commanding General for Support (DCG-S). The risk commanders assume by not aligning or including all non-lethal staff under either the Chief of Staff (COS) or DCG-S is fragmented planning, disjointed execution, degraded use of finite resources, and the potential for sacrificed gains in momentum. The effects coordinator (ECOORD) was responsible for the administrative management of all non-lethal activities and ensured coordination across the division's OE. The three primary staff leads for non-lethal planning were the G7 (IO), G8 (Comptroller), and the G9 (Civil Military Operations). Special staff leads were the Rule of Law OIC, Iraqi Advisory Task Force (IQATF) OIC, and Assessments OIC (Figure 1). Other, by exception, staff leads or representatives who did not report directly to ECOORD but who contributed to the non-lethal targeting process were the Civil Affairs Battalion Commander, Public Affairs (PA) Officer, Division Engineer (DIVENG), Division Surgeon, Division Political Advisor, Geospatial Collection Manager, and BCT Liaison Officers (LNOs). The above individuals comprised the main non-lethal targeting working group and were charged with providing inputs, feedback, and recommendations throughout the non-lethal targeting process.

The non-lethal targeting working group convened weekly and was a prelude to the non-lethal targeting meeting. The DCG-S established the agenda and area of focus based on the CG's guidance. During the working group, members outlined detailed activity in their respective areas. Members were responsible for ensuring that proper coordination and synchronization occurred and that status of projects was updated. For this reason, non-lethal members must come prepared

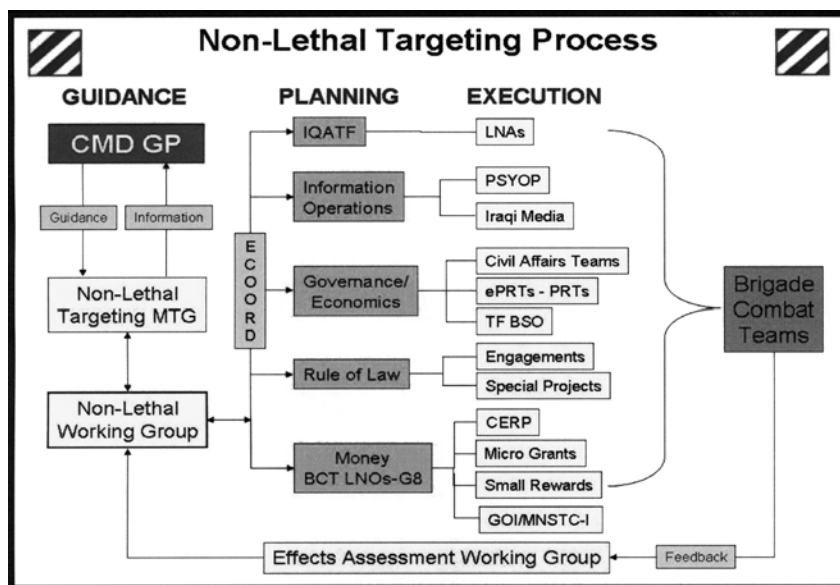


Figure 1. The Non-Lethal Targeting Process
(3rd Inf Div/Information Operations G7)

to discuss the particulars of each project or initiative. One of the challenges is not to make recommendations or decisions based on incomplete or inaccurate data. With the financial expenditures on some projects totaling millions, it is paramount for members to remain knowledgeable; this is especially applicable to LNOs who are representing their brigades. The non-lethal targeting meeting also convened weekly, normally two days following the working group session. The ECOORD facilitated the presentation of data to the command group, which comprised the CG, DCG-S, DCG-M, COS, and CSM, and provided the group's recommendations on the projected way ahead. Task Force Marne, due to the lengthy list of non-lethal projects and activities throughout the OE, chose to alter the weekly topics of discussion; the first and third weeks of the month concentrated on governance and economics and the second and fourth weeks concentrated on IO, ROL, and IQATF. Special initiatives took exception and the group briefed as needed.

Influencing the local populace favorably is paramount to securing support against terrorism and sectarian extremism. The more the Coalition and, more importantly, the Government of Iraq (GOI) can do to improve the

environment, the more the local populace will accept the new government and its concepts of unity, democracy, and freedom. Information Operations, utilizing primarily PSYOP assets, performed daily "influencing" functions by promoting Coalition successes along the security, transition, governance, economic development, and rule of law lines of operations. Task Force Marne IO focused on two main audiences: local Iraqi citizens and the insurgents. By focusing IO efforts on successfully exploiting events, such as Iraqi Army soldiers capturing terrorists, Iraqi Police graduating from academies, provincial council members collaborating with constituents, engineers rebuilding schools, and judges prosecuting criminals, the Task Force changed many negative perceptions. One example of changing perceptions in Task Force Marne's OE pertained to the low public opinion of Vocational and Technical (VOTEC) schools. The schools were severely degraded and practically non-functional when Task Force Marne assumed its battlespace. The Task Force dedicated resources to refurbish each VOTEC. The goal was to provide Iraqis the skills necessary for sustained long-term employment. Initially, the VOTECs offered limited classes and had low enrollment. Tactical PSYOP

assets assisted the division by promoting VOTECs through Face-to-Face (F2F), billboards, and radio messages. Within two months of advertising, enrollment increased dramatically. The challenge to facilitate and promote long-term economic employment still exists; however, continued Coalition partnership and dialogue with the GOI continues to hold promise.

Standard PSYOP dissemination means such as radio, terrestrial and satellite TV, billboards, and print media remained the norm, however, Task Force Marne placed an increased emphasis on key-leader engagements and tribal F2F dialogue. Focused F2F communication strengthened community relationships as well as increased opportunities for collection of actionable intelligence. In order to provide visibility on influential brigade-level engagements, such as governors, mayors, and tribal sheiks, BCT LNOs presented their command's weekly engagement plan during the non-lethal working group session. PSYOP planners developed focused messages for ground commanders to use during their engagements. In order to increase local national visibility on ongoing projects, the Task Force used engagements as opportunities to disseminate posters and handbills. The dissemination of information products to local nationals, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF), and Sons of Iraq checkpoints throughout the division's battlespace proved effective. PSYOP products describing non-lethal initiatives were simple to create, made effective communication tools, and encouraged local national partnership and cooperation.

Additionally, the G7 coordinated all Iraqi media for the Task Force. Iraqi media is a powerful, credible, and cost-effective influencing tool. The alignment of Iraqi media with IO enabled G7 planners to synchronize media events with PSYOP messages, thereby reinforcing key communication themes. The use of Iraqi media assisted the Task Force in promoting progress while maintaining the all-important "Iraqi face." Iraqi media has credibility and its use strengthened local national

perceptions. Moreover, leveraging Iraqi media was a quick and effective way to increase visibility on high-payoff civil projects and activities. As such, The G7 was an integral part of the non-lethal working group and worked closely with all members to ensure LNOs nominated events for media coverage. For infrastructure improvement projects, the G7 coordinated Iraqi media for all ground breaking ceremonies and grand openings, which normally drew a large pool of media. Iraqi media also covered other newsworthy events such as key government officials' participation in local counsel meetings, ISF training and recruiting drives, opening of new businesses, and state-run education and job-placement programs designed to improve local economies. Using Iraqi media in conjunction with attributed PSYOP messaging proved to be a powerful and effective influencing tool.

Civil Military Operations and Funding (G9-G8)

CMO, the second primary non-lethal staff function, was responsible for all Task Force Marne governance and economic activities and initiatives. Leveraging tactical-level civil affairs battalion, embedded Provincial Reconstruction Team (ePRTs), and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) assets, the Task Force executed myriad projects, many of which were funded with Commanders Emergency Response Program (CERP) monies. As Task Force CMO lead, the G9 consolidated BCT-level nominations and recommended projects for funding and prioritization. Moreover, the G9 conferred with the DIVENG and the Task Force Comptroller (G8) to ensure projects were feasible and financially supportable. Of note, CERP funding is a powerful tool for shaping operations, but it is a finite resource. As such, the DCG-S monitored the nomination of projects and expenditure of CERP closely during the non-lethal targeting process; the CG had final approval authority for all CERP spending. In order to maintain visibility on high pay-off projects and provide the CG with periodic situational

awareness, the G9 instituted a top five BCT-level project tracker. The tracker highlighted collective efforts and depicted current status as a percentage of completion; BCT LNOs presented the data weekly during the non-lethal targeting meeting. Early on in Task Force Marne's deployment, the DCG-S, ECOORD, and the G8 formulated a Tiger Team to assist the brigades in learning how to efficiently spend CERP dollars.[18] The team provided detailed information on the proper preparation of necessary documentation and procedures for processing through division. Soon, expenditures were commensurate with



*An ePRT advisor distributes agricultural supplies.
(Task Force Marne.com)*

the needs of each BCT's OE. The training was so effective at battalion and company level that requests for new projects increased 400 percent. At the 12 month deployed mark, Task Force Marne had over 200 CERP projects active across five brigade OEs in four Iraqi provinces and the two southern Qadas of Baghdad; a testament to the division's maturation on implementing money as a munition.

ROL, IQATF, and Assessments

One area with consistent progress was Rule of Law (ROL). Increasing

judicial capacity is a vital component to strengthening the government's span of control, and more importantly, enhancing its ability to provide the population a better way of life. The days of inadequate security forces, partial judicial personnel, deplorable detention facilities, lack of prosecutions, and overall absence of local population confidence in the judicial system are dissipating. Investments in court building renovations, detention facility upgrades, and judicial training and education had a positive impact throughout many of the provinces. IO routinely supported ROL activities and efforts through public awareness campaigns that highlighted improvements in judicial infrastructure and convictions of high-visibility criminals. Task Force Marne funded a "grass roots" judicial capacity-enhancing project designed to equip judges with a common law database. The database provided 280 judges with all Iraqi laws dating back to 1920. A key component to the project was the provision of a laptop computer, providing the judges mobility. This was especially important as many of the judges serving within Task Force Marne's OE performed duties in multiple municipalities. Notably, equally important as judges having access to current Iraqi law was division's policy of maintaining an aggressive ROL engagement strategy. ROL teams maneuvered freely throughout the OE, meet regularly with key judicial leaders, disseminated focused PSYOP products, and using Iraqi media, highlighted numerous judicial capacity-building events. Division ROL facilitated solutions for judges concerns of lack of security, inadequate facilities, and poor communication with the central government. Division's implementation and promotion of effective ROL greatly enhanced the population's confidence in the government's ability to provide security and stability; two important aspects in COIN operations.

The Iraqi Advisory Task Force (IQATF), with its brigade-level multi-function teams and local national advisors operating within the battlespace, played an important role in acquiring

atmospherics. Atmospherics were vital to non-lethal planners' understanding of local national perceptions, attitudes, and behavior. Having insight on how Iraqi citizens perceived ongoing efforts confirmed the validity or deficiencies of non-lethal strategies. More specifically, IQATF personnel surged existing teams on specific command-designated critical non-lethal areas of attention. Examples included observing areas for anti-Coalition or anti-Iraqi Security Force propaganda, which was indicative of deteriorating security conditions within the community; obtaining pricing data of food, clothing, and fuel, indicators of a community's economic viability; and the collection of local sentiments toward the government including courts, an indicator of how well the population perceived the government's involvement, capacity, and effectiveness. The non-lethal working group focused on areas the LNAs consistently reported as being deficient or as having the potential for civil unrest. Planning efforts routinely focused on eliminating turbulence and meeting the population's basic needs.

The final component of the non-lethal targeting process was assessments. Conducting accurate and unbiased operational assessments provided the non-lethal working group the ability to gauge progress. Although some assessments were subjective in nature, they provided a level of fidelity with which to validate planning efforts. The assessments OIC prepared the assessments structure, collected data, and presented material weekly to the ECOORD and monthly to the command group. The assessments OIC presented a more extensive assessment to the command group on a quarterly or as needed basis. It was during these presentations that the command group saw noticeable changes or measurable trends across the OE. Quarterly assessments served to reaffirm viability of current strategies or highlight areas that required adjustment of non-lethal strategies. Periodic non-lethal assessments, similar to daily battlefield circulations, was another element that provided the CG situational awareness of activities developing within his area of responsibility.

Achieving Success in the Non-Lethal Arena

Task Force Marne, over the course of 15 months deployed in Iraq, obligated approximately 1,500 infrastructure and community enhancement projects; infusing \$166 million into local economies. Moreover, the Task Force dispensed 206 micro-grants, providing over \$732,000 in capital to assist local entrepreneurs in revitalizing or creating businesses. Projects ranged from stocking medical clinics with needed supplies to school renovations and restoration of farm land irrigation. Division non-lethal staff members played an important role throughout the process by nominating, prioritizing, funding, and monitoring progress. One notable example that incorporated all facets of non-lethal targeting was the town of Salman Pak in the Mada'in Qada, 20 kilometers southeast of Baghdad. Once a formidable Al Qaeda sanctuary and base for launching offensive operations, it is now considered a "model community" by many standards. Division and brigade level non-lethal planning, resources, and commitment to improving the area were tremendous and yielded miraculous results. The following activities outline how Task Force Marne was able to turn the tide on terrorism and return Salman Pak to its peaceful law abiding citizens.

As 3/3 BCT planners prepared lethal operations as part of Operation Marne Grand Slam to defeat Al Qaeda in Salman Pak, the CG directed concurrent non-lethal planning to jumpstart restoration and revitalization. The goal was to assist the GOI in restoring Salman Pak to its pre-war resort community condition. In order to accomplish the task, non-lethal planners in conjunction with the BCT's leadership developed an aggressive and comprehensive non-lethal strategy. Included was the preparation of an initial engagement plan for Division and Brigade leadership; discussions with key and influential Qada and Nahia officials was paramount to identifying goals and developing the way ahead. Government buy-in, mutual understanding of community needs, and agreed-upon division of labor

and funding cleared the path for the commencement of work. Non-lethal planning focused on restoring water, electricity, medical, waste removal, and education services, renovating government and civic infrastructure, and reinvigorating economic development. The non-lethal working group and brigade staff developed a timeline for projects and, during the non-lethal targeting meetings, kept the CG abreast of progress.

The Division G9, responsible for the governance and economics LOOs, had the greatest support role to the BCT. As work progressed, the G9 monitored each project to ensure unforeseen problems would not jeopardize the timeline. Restoration of essential services comprised the majority of projects as they satisfied community needs while increasing local national support for the government. Some essential service projects were rebuilding water pump and purification systems, repairing downed high-voltage power lines, repaving main road ways, refurbishing medical clinics, reestablishing the main market area, and renovating police stations. Another important project was purchasing trucks and dumpsters to better equip the sanitation department, thereby eliminating the unsightly collection of refuse along roadways and neighborhood streets. In order to restore educational infrastructure, division contracted the refurbishment of one high school and three elementary schools. The two most influential projects impacting the community were the restoration of the hospital and fire station. Once completed, the hospital's capacity included 600 beds for inpatient care, a state-of-the-art trauma center, a world class emergency room, a pediatrics center, and a host of specialty outpatient clinics. Upon its grand opening, local nationals expressed appreciation for the government's restoration of medical services. Equally rewarding was the reopening of the fire station. Al Qaeda and other criminals had ransacked the old fire station and rendered its eight fire trucks inoperable. The brigade contracted for its clean up, renovation, and purchasing of new

trucks; the community is now well prepared for any emergency. To improve community aesthetics, the civil affairs battalion initiated several civic projects to include the refurbishment of a youth center, restoration of two public parks, and removal of debris from surrounding canals.

To increase government and judicial capacity, division ROL and 3/3 BCT contracted projects to rebuild the Salman Pak Governance Center, Jailhouse, and Courthouse. A functioning governance center provided a place for city leaders and community members to meet regularly. To improve capacity and conditions for individuals awaiting trial, the BCT contracted the renovation of the jailhouse. Renovations included upgrades to cells, plumbing, and central air and heating, and the addition of a dispensary. This comprehensive project turned out to be a tremendous success as its debut on Beladi TV changed public opinion and perceptions of inhumane treatment and poor living conditions. Of great significance is the return of judges to the Salman Pak Courthouse. In 2005, Al Qaeda influence forced the Ministry of Justice to relocate judicial services first to the town of Jisr Diyala and then, due to Shia extremists, to Baghdad.[26] After an absence of nearly three years, conditions were set for the judges to move back to Salman Pak, a clear sign that security, stability, governance, and rule of law had returned.

To exploit these successes from an IO perspective, the G7 coordinated Iraqi media to capture all grand openings. Several Iraqi media outlets to include Al Iraqiya and Al Hurra produced full length satellite TV documentaries highlighting many of the successes and, more importantly, the government's involvement in revitalization efforts. To increase public awareness of projects and the perception of prosperity, the G7 contracted installation of 17 billboards throughout the city. Billboard messages and overall themes pertained to promoting ISF competence and capabilities, strength and unity of the government, restoration of infrastructure, educational opportunities, and

economic development. Salman Pak citizens are once again proud to be a part of a productive and well-functioning city. Civilians driving through Salman Pak are truly amazed that such a place in Iraq exists, a testament to the hard and focused non-lethal planning and execution of both the GOI and the Task Force.

Conclusion

Five years after the Coalition's arrival in Iraq, commanders are seeing major development in the non-lethal arena. Attention to the security and transition lines of operations remains important and essential to Iraq's independence, however; equally as important to success is improving governance, economics, communications, and rule of law. Having control of the complex and dynamic OE and having knowledge of the non-lethal targeting process enables commanders to affect positive change across all lines of operations. Dedicating resources to the planning and executing of non-

lethal operations has helped turn the tide on terrorism and created irreversible momentum. Task Force Marne made a commitment to develop an effective non-lethal targeting process. This resulted in significant contributions toward improving infrastructure, restoring essential services, and increasing employment opportunities. As the Task Force transitioned its main effort from security to capacity building in early January 2008, non-lethal planners began to see increasing progress throughout the OE. As projects matured and communities became once again productive, attacks against the Task Force and civilian deaths decreased. Task Force Marne attributed this marked reduction in violence to local nationals seeing positive changes in their communities; no longer are they willing to accept violence, live in fear, and bend to the will of sectarian extremism. Non-lethal efforts, as General Odierno stated, will undoubtedly continue to pave the way for permanent Iraqi stability, unity, and prosperity. 